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My Week

by R. J. Deachman

An American girl employed in the United States Embassy at Moscow resigned the other day and announced that she had been married to a Russian operatic baritone for the past thirteen months.

She expressed the opinion that the Russians were a very fine people, who loved their country, their children and their church and had no desire whatever to interfere with other people. She did feel that there was a touch of suspicion so far as the American Embassy officials were concerned in their relations with Russian officials.

I understand this situation perfectly. The man she married was probably interested in his art, had very little to do with the government was not concerned with politics, and so far as these matters were concerned accepted just what he was told.

The members of the American Embassy would be in contact with Russian government officials and there might be a touch of suspicion on both sides. They would approach each other at arms length, perhaps with minds closed. It's difficult to do business that way. If you want to get the other point of view—the open door policy—visit as I have done an American agricultural college and ask to see the works. They will show you everything, the whole place is yours, that's the right way, the only way.

What is the reason for all this? A meeting of minds should be a meeting of minds but is it possible for that to take place where one represents a totalitarian government and the other a democratic form of government. The trouble is we never know what is in the mind of the totalitarian. We know as little about it as the common people of Russia—or something less than nothing. The citizen of a democratic government has some conception of the things which are going on around him but the average Russian peasant and the average Russian operatic baritone hasn't the foggiest idea of the mind of the Russian government. It is hidden and inescapable. How can we be free with a people who do not understand and where the government gives not the slightest inkling of its intentions.

I have received some delightful letters during the last few days. They have given my heart and mind a lift. One of them came from Hamilton, Ont. He had read an article of mine dealing with the House of Commons in which to a certain extent I defended that much criticized body and suggested that after all we, the electors, were not entirely free from criticism. Here is what he writes:

Hamilton Ontario,

March 1st, 1948.

Dear Mr. Deachman:

I read one of your recent articles. Like you, I have faith in our form of Parliament. I believe that it is so constructed that it is able to better itself. Governments do make mistakes, and a times costly ones. No form of government could be perfect. But I would not trade our Parliament for any other in the world. We have only to read our papers, listen to our radio or travel to other lands to appreciate it.

True, many people will criticize our governments and run them down and that makes me more firm in my belief. I do not know why my fellow workmen do not respect our parliament.

The best improvement in our system of Parliament would be to have every citizen thinking and being concerned with his obligations.

Keep up the good work. Please let me know how I can understand more about our Parliament.

Yours truly,
R. E. O.

A man from Sault Ste Marie, Ont. brings another thought: Canadians could improve the House of Commons if they would turn out 100% to vote, vote, vote.

If every able bodied man and woman, come hell, come high water, voted then I'll bet a cookie there would be a better parliament elected. Why do I think so? Because the candidates would have to be able to speak up and tell why they should be elected and when elected they would work, because they would know that their election depended upon their conduct.

There's a strong point. If the constituents were keenly interested in the House of Commons, they would be a driving force behind the members. Perhaps they do not need to be interested. It may be that they work as if the eye of the master was always on them. Maybe not but the task of an M. P. is a difficult one, and the voter should not expect

too much.

That indefatigable organization the Foundation for Economic Education at Irvington-on-Hudson, New York, has published an interesting book lately entitled 'Why Kill the Goose'. The author is Sherman Rogers and he does a bright job in exploding a number of fallacies. He points out that the American people seem to like these fallacies and never enquire as to the basis of their existence. I am very sorry for the Americans. We are touched with the same disease. Some day I am going to review that book, this is only a casual reference to those common fallacies we Anglo-Saxons cherish as part of our natural heritage.



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